

book (xvi), and it fits neatly into the discipline of practical theology. It would be a valuable resource for those engaged in the more practical aspects of ecclesiology, those training for ministry, and even for parish groups looking for ways to move forward as they grapple with the impact of abuse in their communities. Arbuckle is a gifted communicator, and this work is a welcome contribution to a difficult issue.

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The Catholic Ethicist in the Local Church. Edited by Antonio Autiero and Laurenti Magesa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018. v + 341 pages. \$48.00 (paper).

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This book, the last in the Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church series, focuses on the vocation of Catholic ethicists in particular contexts and the challenges they encounter. After an introduction by the editors, the book is divided into three parts: (1) “Foundational Aspects,” (2) “Contexts and Perspectives,” and (3) “Fields of Conflicts.” The twenty-five individual contributions provide a wealth of perspectives in a very wide range of contexts, emphatically fulfilling its aim of speaking to and from local churches in the context of the world church. It concludes with reflection on “The Emerging Vocation of a Moral Theologian: Commonalities across Contexts” (Marcellus).

“Foundational Aspects” are not only discussed in the first part but also emerge from the discussion of local churches later in the volume. A key foundational theme is the role of the local in relation to the universal magisterium, in particular the teaching authority of local bishops’ conferences. The articles by Himes (“Catholic Social Teaching in a Church that Is Both Local and Universal”) and Tirimanna (“Context and Moral Teaching: The Crucial Importance of the Magisterium of the Local Church”), for example, focus on this as a foundational question, but it is also central to Hilbert Andolsen’s article (“Moral Deafness and Social Sin: Feminist Theologians and the Bishops from a US Perspective,” part 3) on the failed attempt by the US bishops’ conference to finalize the pastoral letter on women’s concerns. The sources of moral theology in pastoral life, particularly the experience of the poor, is emphasized in part 1 (e.g., Gasda, “Theological Ethics and the People of God: Profile, Tensions, and Perspectives” and Blanco “‘The Theology of the End of the World’: Rethinking Theological Ethics from the Existential Peripheries”), highlighting the importance of CELAM Medellin 1968, and also in Catta’s “Giving the Floor to the Poor: New

Challenges for Catholic Ethicists in France” (part 2). This well-structured exploration of foundational themes, which are then at stake in local initiatives and conflicts gives the book both a systematic and dynamically contextual character.

A striking feature of the book is the sheer diversity of the contexts it considers and the ways in which these contexts are related to the global ministry and magisterium of the Catholic Church. An aspect of this diversity is the different kinds of challenges that moral theologians face in different parts of the world. Articles from Australia (Fleming), Belgium (Van Stichel), the United States, Poland (Glombik), and Slovenia (Globokar) consider various forms of secularization, secularism, and technological change (Bennett, the United States, on “digital localities”) and how a Catholic moral theologian can respond to them. Articles from Africa include a call for “an African Catholic fundamental theology” (Magesa), based in family, community, and solidarity, an emphasis on small Christian communities and their role in evangelization in Nigeria (Ojo), electoral violence (Oyier-Ondigo), and terrorism (Opongo). Latin American contributors draw in particular on the CELAM initiatives, as well as reflecting on dialogue with native peoples in Bolivia (Ayala) and Christian witness in communist Cuba (Cáceres). Asian voices include reflection on tensions between traditional Japanese mores and a Catholic emphasis on individual human dignity in relation to abortion and disabled children (Okano); the church’s response to traditional clan practices of “justice as healing” in Gujarat (Kodithottam); and respect for cultural and church tradition while seeking to gently correct patriarchal tendencies among seminarians in the context of communist Vietnam (Y-Lan Tran).

The great value of this book lies in its vivid and multifarious demonstration of unity in diversity. Through the consideration of both foundations and contexts, it illustrates key themes of moral theology: universal and local magisterium, tradition, experience, the option for the poor, dialogue, prophecy, and the relationship between reflection and action. Through all this, it is marked by trust in the Holy Spirit as both the voice of the poor and suffering and the guarantor of the church’s unity. It will be of great value for both undergraduates and graduates by providing a clear and comprehensive exemplar of contextual theology, as well as encouraging diverse lines of theological research.

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